



PHIL 8 - Methods of Argument

Catalog Description

Transfer Status: CSU/UC

Prerequisite: ENGL C1000 or ENGL C1000E

Unit(s): 3.00

Lecture: 51.00 Contact hours/102.00 Out of class hours/153.00 Total hours/3.00 Unit(s)

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Course Description: This course is a study of argumentative writing, including traditional topics in logic. The course will emphasize the application of argumentative methods and models to the analysis of contemporary moral, political, economic, and philosophical issues.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Analyze an argument in terms of traditional logic (definitions, assumptions, premises and conclusion, deduction and induction, and formal and informal fallacies).
2. Identify the difference between subjective and objective claims; belief and knowledge.
3. Apply appropriate standards to the evaluation of judgments of value.
4. Evaluate assumptions, evidence, testimony, and statistics as they are used in argumentative writing.
5. Write an essay that demonstrates the use of generally accepted standards of good argumentation in the identification and use of sources, evidence, and reasons.
6. Articulate viewpoints found in diverse cultural, political, gender, scientific, philosophical, and religious contexts.

Course Content

Topic Titles / Suggested Time Topic	
	<u>Lecture</u>
<u>Topics</u>	<u>Lec Hrs</u>
Reading arguments	6.00
a. Examining assumptions (stated and unstated)	
b. Active reading (summarizing and paraphrasing, thesis identification)	
Arguing about issues	6.00
a. Reason vs. rationalization	
b. Definitions, assumptions, premises and conclusion, syllogism, evidence, examples, authoritative testimony, deduction and induction, sound and strong arguments, statistics, emotional appeals and other fallacies	
c. Genre identification (such as satire, sarcasm, polemical work, philosophical essay)	
Writing an argument and the written analysis of arguments	6.00
a. Analyzing an argument (claims and their support)	
b. Identifying the author's thesis, purpose, methods, persona	
c. Construction an argument (planning, drafting, and revising a paper)	
Using sources	6.00
a. Evaluating print and electronic sources	
b. Quoting from sources; plagiarism	
c. Integrating arguments and sources	
d. Documentation	
Case Studies in Education for Argument Analysis	6.00
a. Compulsory education vs. home schooling	
b. Conservative, progressive, and radical education	
Analysis of Philosophical Essays	6.00
a. John Stuart Mill	
b. Immanuel Kant	
c. Aristotle	
Case Studies in Moral Philosophy for Argument Analysis	6.00
a. Utilitarianism	
b. Duty-based ethics	
c. Virtue ethics	
Case Studies in Personal Ethics for Argument Analysis	6.00
a. Self-deception	

Topics

Lec Hrs

b. Happiness

Analysis of Book-Length Philosophical Argument

3.00

a. Approaches

b. Vocabulary

c. Research

d. Application

Total Hours: 51.00

Methods of Instruction

A. Discussion

B. Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture

C. Lecture

D. Multimedia Presentations

E. Reading Assignments

F. Writing (minimum 6000 word writing requirement)

Methods of Evaluation

A. Exams/Tests

B. Quizzes

C. Portfolios

D. Papers

E. Homework

F. Class participation

Examples of Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. Read "Those Who Walk Away From Omelas" and be prepared to formulate and discuss the implied argument it contains against Jeremy Bentham's form of utilitarianism.
2. Read the chapter on argument types and fallacies and be prepared to pick out arguments from a group of passages.

Writing Assignments

1. Read "The Apology" by Plato and be prepared in a short essay of at least 500 words to evaluate Socrates' claim that "the unexamined life is not worth living."
2. In a substantive discussion post of at least 300 words, express in your own words and evaluate Paulo Freire's argument against what he calls "the nutritional they of knowledge."

Out-of-Class Assignments

1. For a week, obey the "moral law" as Immanuel Kant describes it. Keep a reflective journal, and be prepared to discuss the argument Kant makes in support of the "categorical imperative."
2. Over the course of several weeks, determine which small habit needs to be added or eliminated for you to flourish as Aristotle describes in his essay on happiness. Keep a self-reflective journal and be prepared thoughtfully to consider Aristotle's argument that true happiness is objective.

Recommended Materials of Instruction

Barnet, S., Bedau, H. (2023). Current Issues and Enduring Questions. *New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 13th.* 9781319332068.

Moore, B. N., & Parker, R. (2021). Critical Thinking. *McGraw-Hill, 13th.* 9781319332068.

D. Hacker, D. (2017). A Writer's Reference. *Bedford + Martin, 9th.*

Minimum Qualifications

Philosophy (Masters Required)

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